



MONTEREY NEWS

February 2005
VOLUME XXXV • Number 2



The Town

Winter weather provokes serious conversations, but on January 31 the talk around town was about how the invasion of a “furnace imp” disabled the heating systems in Town Hall, the Library, the school, and even the General Store. According to Director of Operations Maynard Forbes, the “warm” weather the day before caused an automatic turn-off of Town Hall’s thermostats. Unfortunately, colder weather in the evening did not retrigger the furnaces.

In general, though, weather prediction in Monterey should improve considerably now that the town is poised to

become an official weather station. Forbes says that the National Weather Service (NWS) will install equipment behind the town transfer station to “modernize the cooperative weather observing network.” As NWS states, “Monterey is located in a favored corridor for severe weather, and a station located at the town garage would be ideal in support of NWS’s forecast and warning programs.”

On the Roads

The Highway Department reports that the clean-up on Fairview Road is proceeding, that approval for the easement for the River Road bridge will need to come from a Town Meeting, and that

work was to have begun on the New Marlborough Road bridge in January.

A quick look at Highway Department records by Town Accountant Barbara Gauthier showed that Monterey saved about \$9,000 during the virtually snow-free December, but the frequent snows in January quickly wiped out this surplus. The Select Board relayed to Forbes the many compliments about the excellent condition of town roads this winter.

The development spurt in Monterey has produced many side effects, one of which is frequent truck travel on our picturesque country roads. Fairview Road has become a throughway for heavy trucks because the state has placed a weight



Kathryn Roberts

The Icelandic horses at Roberts Woods Farm seem to have no trouble with Berkshire winters. Story on p. 8.

restriction on Beartown Mountain Road. "It's the bridge," said Forbes in response to questions about why Beartown Mountain Road was thus restricted. Although there is wide agreement that the bridge can accommodate loads far heavier than its current 10-ton limit, the state has determined otherwise. Forbes does not believe that anything can be done about the situation because the state replaces only broken bridges. "It's not broken, it's just got a limitation on it," he says.

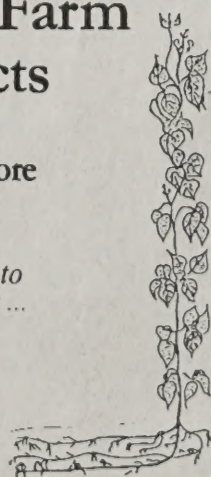
The "catastrophic engine failure" of a dump truck caused it to roll over on Fairview Road in early January as it delivered dead sand to the Webb's building site on Beartown Mountain Road. At a Select Board meeting held at the Coffee Club on the day that Town Hall's heating failed, citizens present said that a new ban on truck traffic on Fairview Road would be appropriate. "It's a health and safety issue," said Larry Klein, a Fairview resident.

Forbes said that closing Fairview Road to truck traffic might have to go through the Massachusetts Highway Department, which could very well turn down the request because of the limitation it has placed on Beartown Mountain Road.

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The *Monterey News* is published monthly under the auspices of Monterey United Church of Christ, Monterey, MA 01245.

The Police on the Beat

At each week's Select Board meeting, Police Chief Gareth Backhaus opens his report with a listing of police actions. False alarms are always the most frequent problem. More than fifty homes in Monterey have alarms, but Backhaus says the false alarms come primarily from the same five homes. Alarm permits are issued every January. The 2005 annual letter to alarm-wired households includes the relevant portion of the Town Bylaws so residents will understand the necessity of the yearly permit. The registration fee remains at \$25.

Aside from false alarms, in January the Police Department dealt with the arrest of a young person for breaking into a house, two motor vehicle accidents, several car lockouts, and a suspicious car report. The Police Department also provided an escort for the funeral of longtime resident Henry Makuc.

Backhaus advised the Select Board that there is a new "lower tolerance" policy in effect for speeding offenses. "There has been an increase in speeding in town, and we're responding to it," he warned.

Select Board member Michele Miller asked if Monterey could emulate Lenox in becoming an "idle-free" town. Backhaus said that Monterey already has an anti-idling law on its books, and that the Police Department tries for voluntary compliance with this statute.

Building Issues

Building Commissioner Don Torrico plans to educate Monterey residents about what projects need permits. "Ordinary repairs do not require a building permit, but there are people in town who need a permit for what they are building."

Signs, too, require permits. The Planning Board grants such requests, and, depending on the sign's size and placement, there may be a need for the Building Commissioner's oversight, too.

Monterey residents are permitted to engage in home occupations in a space of up to 600 sq. ft., but if the public uses that space, it must comply with the state building code for accessibility.

A stop-work order was posted on a project of Wayne Burkhart, who responded with a permit issued ten years earlier. Torrico noted that the permit required completion in "timely fashion," and those present at the meeting questioned whether work continuing for ten years met that criterion. Torrico hopes to help Burkhart address the questions his project has raised.

The Blue Heron property on Route 57 has attracted a buyer, who produced signed affidavits, old maps, and deeds testifying that the five structures on the property existed prior to the current zoning law.

A lengthy discussion among the Select Board, the chairman of the Conservation Commission (ConCom) and the Building Inspector concerned the dispute

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between Michael Germain and the Board of Health. Germain is proposing to install a septic system two lots away from the one on which he plans to build a house. The Board of Health has raised a series of questions about the proposal, wondering how the wetlands will be treated with a new septic system, how the structure that will have to be built for an aboveground system will relate to the main water line, and how to resolve the results of a perk test. The Conservation Commission approved the Germain application, but now it needs decisions from the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) and the Board of Health. Once those boards have issued their judgments, the Building Commissioner will be in a position to assess the petition.

Gary Danko, Alternate Building Inspector, was introduced to the Select Board. Danko, a certified local inspector, is a builder, and works for Becket, Otis, and Lee as assistant or alternate building inspector. Additionally, he owns a B & B and gift shop in Otis.

Torrico reported that Town Hall architect David Bixby submitted a bill for blueprints, a charge Torrico said the town should not have to pay. Torrico is filing a

job description for a two-hour per week clerk to assist him. Finance Committee members Stan Ross and Debra Mielke voiced their approval for this position.

The Building Commissioner noted several times that the Highway Department is not shoveling the entries and exits of Town Hall, a task that needs to be done for safe accessibility to a public building.

Torrico has called a meeting with "subinspectors" (those who oversee plumbing, wiring, and gas) to review the appropriate protocol for their work. He suggested that the monthly town report include a list of building permits issued. Accordingly, in January, the Vandervort household, at 140 Beartown Mountain Road, applied for a permit to build the addition of a sunroom to their house.

Torrico said that his efforts to bring building inspections up to contemporary standards is hampered by standard technical assistance. Common necessities such as a functioning telephone line, working lights, and an Internet connection need to be provided. He said he does not receive all the faxes sent to him, and for legal purposes he needs to have the machine programmed to show the correct date and time of receipt.

Town Clerk Barbara Swann pointed out that both the Town Clerk and the Building Commissioner need to be informed before variance hearings are scheduled.

ConCom Chairman Chris Blair reported that work has begun on property

on the north side of Mt. Hunger Road owned by Alice Hanlon. A letter was sent to the owners of property on the north side of Route 23, across from West Stevens Lake Road, noting that the trees they were cutting down for firewood were on lots that could be affected by the Scenic Mountain Act.

Fire Department Issues

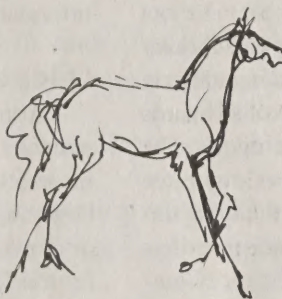
Fire Chief Ray Tryon reported that \$30,105 was paid to Monterey firemen in the first half of this fiscal year. This midyear total is more than \$5,000 higher

than Tryon's original estimate for the first half of the \$50,000 annual payout to Monterey firefighters. In defending the excess cost, Tryon explained that the \$5,250 that was spent on special training is not expected to continue into the second half of the fiscal

year. Paying the firemen for their time has, as anticipated, increased attendance at the weekly training sessions. A junior recruit from West Otis has enrolled.

Town Accountant Barbara Gauthier pointed out that the Fire Department's telephone bill included a monthly charge of \$156 for unlimited long-distance calls. Neither Tryon nor Forbes were aware of the steep charge.

Well after the December Town Meeting ended, the acrimonious debate it spawned continues to reverberate, with particular attention paid to the Fire Chief's request for \$8,000 for a new truck. Select Board Chair Jon Sylbert points out that



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when the additional funding for the Fire Department was first broached, Chief Tryon stated that the funds were needed to pay for matching grants. At the Town Meeting, though, Tryon announced that the funds were requested to pay for a truck. Although the request led to a heated debate, it was approved. As information about the change in the reason for the \$8,000 request circulates, questions have been raised about the propriety of the vote, and whether the truck belongs to the town.

Finances

While some residents may be out celebrating Valentine's Day on February 14, others will be attending the quarterly meeting that night. Members of all boards are asked to attend and give reports. The Select Board and the Finance Committee agreed that since money is the topic under discussion, informational meetings should be conducted by the Finance Committee. That committee will be asking all boards and committees to detail their budget requests. They warned that budget requests lacking justification will be returned to the board or committee for amplification.

The Finance Committee has begun meeting once a month to review the appropriations and balance sheets provided by Barbara Gauthier. Marty Chernoff requested that the budget presented to Town Meeting contain a column indicating the Finance Committee's recommendation on individual items.

Stan Ross reminded the Select Board that 2005 is a revaluation year for Monterey, and that a revaluation official from the Department of Revenue has already been assigned to the town.

Administrative Assistant Bonnie Tedder said that the state and the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission are offering Pictometry software, said to provide an accurate overlay of satellite photography to the tax-base map, free to towns, but not to the public. Pictometry has the potential to save Monterey \$65,000 if the town does not have to buy information overlays.

Odds and Ends

Administrative Assistant Tedder announced very exciting, but ultimately incorrect, news that Monterey would soon be getting DSL connections within 3 miles of Town Hall. The buzz was that the federal Department of Homeland Security was providing the funds so Verizon would install the necessary equipment. A call to Verizon provided less encouraging news, specifically that "new technology is on the horizon," and that this new technology will be available "within a year." The Select Board suggested that Representative William "Smitty" Pignatelli and Senator Andrea Nuciforo be contacted to see how DSL connections might be expedited.

Tedder asked if the Ballygally house, currently renting below the local low-income threshold, can be used as part of

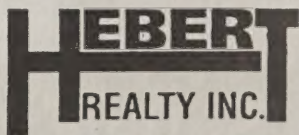
Monterey's affordable housing requirements. Tim Geller, director of Construct and a Berkshire County guru on 40B issues (40B being the insider's shorthand for low-income housing rules), told Tedder what needed to be included in a deed restriction, and suggested contacting attorney Tony Blair, a local expert on 40B regulations.

Although the Monterey website (monterey-ma.org) is up and running, there are lacunae in the information displayed. Tedder asked that she get board minutes on disk so they can be transferred expeditiously to the website. The ZBA minutes are on tape, and there is no printed summary.

Expressing concern with the tenor of the December Town Meeting, Kenn Bassler, proprietor of the Monterey General Store, offered to put up a bulletin board in the store to provide information about town activities. He may also put a computer terminal in the store that would allow people access to the town's web site.

The Select Board members have not agreed about who speaks for the Board in public meetings. Specifically, is silence by board members considered agreement with the speaker? There was no definitive answer. The evening Select Board meeting is typically the third Monday of every month. Monterey is the only town in the Berkshires whose Select Board meets during the day. The board members pointed out that no one comes to the evening meetings.

— Laurily K. Epstein



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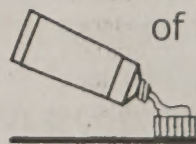
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Candidates Sought for Town Officers

The list that follows gives the offices that will be up for reelection this coming May in the Annual Town Election.

Anyone interested in running for an office is encouraged to contact the Democratic or Republican Town Committees, regardless of your party affiliation. The Democratic contact is Muriel Lazzarini, 528-5796, or e-mail malazz@map.com. The Republican contacts are Mark Makuc, 528-1382, Linda Thorpe, 528-2164 (e-mail let@vgernet.net)

Board of Appeals, 5 years
Board of Assessors, 3 years
Board of Health, 3 years
Cemetery Committee, 3 years
Finance Committee, 3 years
Library Trustee, two for 3 years each
Moderator, 1 year
Park Commission, 3 years
Planning Board, two for 5 years each;
one for 2 years
Select Board, 3 years
Tree Warden, 1 year

School Committee Representative

Due to term limits set by the state, there will be an opening for Monterey's representative on the Southern Berkshire School Committee this coming year. This position is appointed by the Select Board for a two-year term. Anyone interested is urged to contact the Select Board directly, or the Republican or Democratic Town Committees.

Peter S. Vallianos **Attorney at Law** **528-0055**

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A Feast of Words at Feb. 9 Community Dinner

Every so often the guest speakers at the Monterey potluck are writers from our own community, and this year this traditional happening will take place on February 9th. As always, all are welcome to join us at 6:00 p.m. when the meal begins, and everyone is invited to stay for the program that starts at around 7:00 and ends close to 8:00. Each writer will read a short original work.

On January 12th about thirty people attended the potluck to hear Dr. Philip Bhark speak about the connection be-

tween our health and our lifestyles. He is truly a great speaker and a wise man. Thank you, Philip, for the inspiration.

The March potluck will be Wednesday, March 9th, when Monterey artist Leonard Weber will speak about his work and travels in Japan. Japanese tea will be served after dinner.

We meet in the community room of the Monterey Meetinghouse and ask that you please bring something to share for the potluck, a utensil to serve it with, and a place setting for yourself. In case of bad weather, check the answering machine at the church (528-5850) for cancellations and postponements.

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Daffodil Days Are Coming!

You can bring some signs of spring into your home and support a worthy cause at the same time by ordering daffodils in the annual American Cancer Society drive. Pat Mielke is spearheading the drive this year, taking over from Fran Amidon. This will be the twenty-first year of the drive, and we look for your support again.

The daffodils are delivered cut, and tightly budded, in bunches of ten. The cost is still \$7.00 a bunch, which must be prepaid upon ordering. The last day to order is Feb. 24th.

Checks made out to American Cancer Society can be mailed to Pat Mielke at P.O. Box 394, Monterey MA. 01245

To order you may call Pat Mielke at 528-5603 (home) or 528-0182, ext. 12, at work. Other workers will be making calls too—we don't want you to be overlooked!

The Monterey General Store will again help by being the pickup spot. We will announce the exact day in next month's *Monterey News*. If you have any questions call Pat.

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An Evening of Music

Time magazine once said that a hootenanny is to folk music what a jam session is to jazz. Like jam sessions, hootenannys never really went away. In the early 1960s, the ABC TV show *Hootenanny*, famous for shaking up the airways, called its music "folk," but the genre encompasses lots of other music as well: blues, ethnic, country, traditional ... something written today, something cutting-edge ... you name it. And a hootenanny can happen whenever and wherever there are people playing and singing music together—homes, festivals, school, or churches. And speaking of churches ...

On Friday, March 11, at 7:30 p.m., the Monterey Cultural Council will sponsor its own Hootenanny at the Monterey Meetinghouse. Organized by Monterey musicians Joe Baker and Joel Schick, this free event will carry on the tradition of musicians gathering to swap songs and play music together. You are all invited, and don't think you have to be a pro to participate. Just bring your instrument (your voice counts too) and perform a piece if you wish, sing along when the chorus rolls around, or be a member of the audience—because what, after all, is a performance without an audience?

If you have questions about the event, call Joel (528-3128) or Joe (528-5134), or just show up. In case of bad weather, a cancellation will be recorded on the church machine, so call 528-5850 before getting out on the roads. Spread the word and join us at this community event that is guaranteed to chase away the winter blues—except those of a musical variety, of course.

Burning Season, Permits

Burning season runs from January 15 through April 30. To get a burn permit, call 528-1734, press the pound key (#) and number 2, and leave your name, address of where you intend to burn, and a phone number. You must call on the day you want to burn. We do not issue permits ahead of time. This call is your permit. No one will call back unless there is a problem.

You can only burn brush, tree trimmings, and the like. You cannot burn leaves, building materials, tires, or building debris. All fires must be out by 4:00 p.m. Someone must tend the fire at all times while it is burning. You are responsible for your fire. You must have tools and/or a hose with running water nearby to control your fire. You must be at least 75 feet from any building. If the fire gets out of control, don't hesitate in calling 911; the longer it is out of control, the harder it will be to put out.

Burning will not be allowed on days that the Fire Chief determines to be unsafe or when there is poor air quality. There is no appeal to this decision.

There will be no extensions to the burning season. It will end on the 30th of April, or before if conditions warrant it.

If you chose to burn without a permit, the fine is \$500, plus the cost of putting out the fire.

— Maynard Forbes
Director of Operations



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Gould Farm News

At the January meeting of the Gould Farm Board of Directors it was voted to accept the Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) proposal, which will preserve over two hundred acres of Gould Farm land as permanent farmland. The two-hundred-plus acres are on both sides of Curtis Road, both sides of Gould Road, known locally as Lover's Lane, and the northerly side of Wellman Road, all with frontage on town roads. The agricultural preservation funds are distributed by the United States Department of Agriculture, the Commonwealth's Department of Agricultural Resources, the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program, and local supporting groups such as Berkshire Natural Resources Council (BNRC) and the Monterey Preservation Land Trust.

The initial step in awarding any funds is the appraisal process, which was made possible by a grant of \$5,000 from the Monterey Preservation Land Trust, and the support of the BNRC. The appraisal figure to keep the land in agricultural use was \$710,000, of which \$600,000 will be given to Gould Farm, with the remaining \$110,000 to be raised through local contributions. Although this figure is far below the amount that could be raised if development were to take place, it will enable Gould Farm to honor its mission of keep-

ing its acreage as farm or forestry land.

Over two years ago when discussion was first started by Kingsley Kelley and Stan Ross, Gould Farm Board members, to approach the Department of Agricultural Resources for help in raising money, the plan was to use the \$600,000 to build a Staff House to enable the staff members who live off campus to return, as now some staff live in rented facilities at the Federal Fish Hatchery in New Marlborough and the Parsonage in Monterey. Since that time, new immediate needs have arisen to finance the cost of infrastructure to provide a new water system for the farm facilities and upgrade and license the septic system. These upgrade costs have been estimated at well over \$600,000 and will take precedent over plans for any new building.

The dream and the need for a new living facility for staff will not go away; just in the last week in January, Gould Farm petitioned the Monterey Zoning Board of Appeals for an extension of its architectural plans for the Staff House, which was granted. Gould Farm, a non-profit therapeutic community dedicated to helping people suffering from mental illness, is an important part of the Monterey community and is dedicated to keeping its commitment to agricultural open land.

— Georgiana O'Connell

Monterey Cultural Council Grants and Programs

In the annual Grants cycle, the Cultural Council received 31 grant applications this fall, up from the 29 of last year. However, since the amount of money we are given each year by the state has been severely reduced, we were able to approve only fifteen of the grants for full or partial funding. The total we granted out is \$2,675. The town will see the results of these grants in numerous ways: eight grants were for programs that will be directed to parts of our regional school enrichment, four will support area concert series, one will allow a local library program, and the other two will support local artist training and communication. The next cycle's deadline for applications will be October 15.

The Cultural Council is planning more local events for our community; look for information in this issue about our Hootenanny on March 11, and for application details for our second "How's It Made?" show, to be held September 3.

—Joe Baker

MontereyCultural Council



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Roberts Woods Farm Selected as 2005 "Horse Farm of Distinction"

The 7,200 members that comprise the Massachusetts Farm Bureau selected Roberts Woods Farm to receive its prestigious Horse Farm of Distinction honor for 2005. The award is the result of statewide judging to determine horse farms and stables that epitomize perfection. Each farm nominated for the designation is evaluated in the areas of horse health management, farm management, and compliance with Farm Bureau requirements. Only farms and stables scoring above the eighty-fifth percentile are eligible to receive the award.

Roberts Woods Farm received 99 out of 100 points. Marc and Kathryn Roberts, owners of Roberts Woods Farm, attribute their success to the commitment and hard work of Farm Manager and son-in-law Brian Puntin. "Starting the farm in 1997, it was our dream to raise and train Icelandic horses. Brian allows us to accomplish our goals in the day-to-day running of the farm, in the marketplace selling and buying of horses, and with educational clinics. If you stop by the farm many weekends in the warmer months, you will see trainers from Iceland with groups of students who have traveled

with their horses from as far away as Maine and New Jersey to hone their equestrian skills."

Icelandic horses are small, sturdy, and hardy with versatility in riding performance. Their special gait—the tolt, a fast, smooth running walk—is the reason these horses are becoming popular in the U.S.

"The temperament of the horse is also what attracted me," says Kathryn Roberts. "In Iceland the horses have no predators, but it is a country with environmental dangers such as quicksand, rock slides, and rivers with changing currents, so the ability to assess a situation rather than the instinct to flee have been essential to survival. As a result, these horses lack the spookiness that characterizes many other horses. Because they don't fear living things, they seek strong attachments to people and are nurturing and affectionate."

Roberts Woods Farm expects two foals this spring sired by their stallion, Glitfaxi. An open house is planned on June 2, 2005, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. for fun on the farm and a chance for the community to meet the new foals. Mark your calendar for games and horse rides for the kids and riding demonstrations showcasing the talents of these lively horses.

Visitors are always welcome. Please call 528-6188.

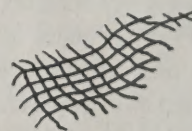
— Esther Heffernan

How's It Made? —Call for Artists

The Monterey Cultural Council is pleased to announce that applications are now being accepted for the second "How's It Made?" show, to be held Saturday, September 3, 2005, at the Firehouse Pavilion.

Our first "How's It Made?" (2003) was a rousing success—hundreds of people visited (we lost count!) and all 22 artists exhibiting and demonstrating were busy all day long. We are looking forward to another stimulating and successful day. Once again, our focus will be on presenting a variety of arts and crafts by artists who like to show the public **how** they do what they do.

If you are interested in applying for this juried event, please pick up an application form at the Town Offices, or request one from Joe Baker at 413-528-5134 (or joe@bakerworks.com). The application deadline is March 10.



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Wilson McLaughlin House Public Meeting Feb. 16

Mark your calendars: Wednesday, February 16, 7 p.m., at the Town Offices. That's the date of the first informational meeting, conducted by the Committee to discuss the creation of the Monterey Community Center.

As many readers know, this committee, appointed by the Select Board, has been looking into various options for making good use of Edith Wilson's gift to the town. In her will, she bequeathed her house and land to the town, with the stipulation that the house be maintained in good condition and used for municipal purposes. The town voted to accept this gift, and it is time to move forward and take full advantage of this opportunity. After talking with many town committees, all speaking of a need for a community center, the Wilson McLaughlin Committee will bring their proposal, still very much in the planning stages, to Monterey citizens so that all can participate.

Our proposal is based on using privately raised funds to do the necessary construction and repair, rather than town funds. A non-profit organization, Friends of Wilson McLaughlin House, is being formed to handle grants and donations for the building project. Please try to attend this meeting, ask questions, offer ideas, and let us know how you would like to help. It is a big undertaking, and

Green Corner Use Your Power to Choose Your Power

Over the next few months, clean energy enthusiasts who sign up for GreenerWatts New England will help Monterey win a \$5,000 grant for a solar electric project. How? The Center for Ecological Technology (CET) will award \$5,000 to the four communities in western Massachusetts with the highest percentage of residents who enroll in GreenerWatts. "This friendly competition will reward the four communities," explained CET's Laura Dubester. "We want to involve more people in supporting clean energy and help smaller communities receive enough funding to be able to show off a renewable energy project." Funding for

the "many hands" concept will be in the forefront.

At the meeting the Select Board will introduce the Wilson McLaughlin Committee. We will make a short presentation about Edith Wilson, the house & land, the community center idea, the building project, and the fundraising plans. Then we will open the floor for questions and discussion.

We welcome a lively meeting, full of ideas and enthusiasm.

— Susan Sellow
Wilson McLaughlin Committee

CET's contest comes from the U.S. Department of Energy.

In addition, 30% of each dollar spent on your GreenerWatts New England premium will be matched by the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MTC). When a town achieves at least 3% participation, a bonus payment of \$50 per participant will also be made. Add up these three sources of money and even a small town can think about a solar electric installation.

Would you prefer to support coal and fossil fuels or solar and renewable energy sources? Put your power of choice into action. Monterey residents Joe Baker, Michael Banner, Joyce Brown, Laury Epstein, Will Marsh, Michelle Miller, Peter Murkett, Bonner McAllester, David McAllester, Storrs Olds, Glynis Oliver, and Ellen Pearson are already supporting a clean energy future. Join them and help the town at the same time. To sign up for GreenerWatts New England, you must be a Massachusetts Electric Company customer. To learn more, contact Peggy MacLeod, 800-369-3333 or peggym@cetonline.org, or visit www.greenerwattsnewengland.com.

— Ruth Dinerman
Director of Communications, CET

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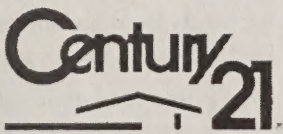
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The Blind Girl's Song

*Speak to me of shadows
that I may learn of light
and sing to me of sadness
that I may know delight*

*Tell me of the willows
that bend beside the stream
whisper of the reedy shore
that I may lie and dream*

*Show me what I do not know
and kiss my opening eyes
I lie beside the water
and know love never dies*

*Lead me by the river
down beside the sea
speak to me of lovers
but never you and me*

*Take away the stone
that lies upon my heart
God knows that in the morning
you and I will part*

*I do know now of shadows
that led me to delight —
o love, and must you leave me
who lit my inner light!*

— A. O. Howell

It's Not the Time of Year to Be a Tree

*It's not the time of year to be a tree;
at least an old one, feeling aches and pains.
From melancholy you cannot break free
as darkness falls along with freezing rains.*

*Each spring and summer, when your leaves arrive,
their cool green webbing fills you with good cheer.
On color and soft breezes you can thrive,
until those fickle comrades disappear.*

*Invigoration lessens in the fall,
as you prepare to brave the elements.
You grimly brace yourself as you recall
the strains of winter, soon to recommence.*

*And when the snowy chill takes center stage
you creak and groan, and often feel your age.*

— Ed Schur

The Violet Sea

*When mad waves erupt,
wind scrapes peace from our ears
heartbreak and tenderness teeter
where humanity disappeared.*

*That day, light strayed through fluttering hands
stung by the death of thousands
our breakfast lay half eaten, growing cool —
and a lone clock chimed
between coughs of silence.*

*With generations lost,
all that matters is kindness,
praising life, even when hibiscus hang limp.*

*Brush salt from a stranger's eye,
and the Earth trembles —
reminded of its own loveliness,
coaxed back from a violet sea.*

— M. Hamilton

When I Can Finally Remember

if I were a master Ikkyu
— but I ain't an' thats that! —
he had his monastic piety to abhor
while I jus' got my greedy little
in the name o' God
world of wars to abhor
I'd write a poem anyways
an' pass it on to him
'bout shakin' clods an' cursin' blackflies
'bout haulin' old shit an' dancin' with swallows
an' how nothin' really matters
'cept that plunge in the pond
when it's all washed off
when I can finally remember
the poem I wanted to write
for you beneath the cherry tree
glass held out to yankee spring
where the weed grows high
yet my scythe, unsheathed an' sharpened,
'll sweep order back in my universe
an' take what comes at harvest time
where the shadow play of impermanence
plays itself out in quake or wave
pestilence or providence
Ikkyu an' me, got bows to the sensorial world
— an' that's that! —
we know how to raise a glass
to the moon, full or empty
to the snow, first or last
to the hundred thousand blossoms blighted
before their time
to appease the beast o' bones
so the mad stroll of us stragglers
... continues
let the tongue o' the zealot
lick the ass o' the bigot!
the constant task is gratitude
how much an' how sincere
I guess a "thank you" is in order
for every step o' the stroll
comin' or goin'

— R. Zukowski

Mackerel

pausing in a pregnant moment
pondering a life yet to live
startling enlightenment of
a spanish mackerel tethered
fresh on the tongue
reminiscent in the mind
deep memories of Barcelona harbor
lapping jagged rocks divided
"we did love once, deeply, yes?"
the old fisherman's empty net!
"the end of one story" he says
"is the beginning of another"
he sits with his Madeira
caressing his grayness
remembering when mackerel
filled his heart
when his tongue
was really alive

— Robert Hirsch & R. Zukowski



February: Devil-down-head and Love

This winter has dealt us some real old-fashioned cold. Woodpiles around town are shrinking, long johns stay on 24-7, and the sunflower-seed level in the tubular feeder drops like mercury. You get people of a certain age muttering about Costa Rica, talking relocation. This is not about presidential disappointments or Social Security scares. It is plain old cold weather pain, stiff and creaky backs from snow shoveling. It's a weariness that New Englanders have always somehow borne.

Just when we think we can't take it any more, we begin to notice things. The sun is coming up a bit earlier. The houseplants are putting on fresh growth, even flowers. Out in the bird feeders something is happening, too. Here we often see it first in the nuthatches.

These sturdy little blue-gray birds run with the chickadees and kinglets all winter in what ornithologists call mixed flocks. They don't seem to have any special relationships, just a practical strength in numbers. Then one day they get goofy. I say this in its strictest anthropomorphic sense. If I were a nuthatch and did what they do, it would be goofiness. In the nuthatch, it is love.

I noticed a few days ago a chase scene out on a big cherry branch just below our house. One nuthatch scurrying

after another, with no regard for gravity. Now and then it would stop and spread its wings and sway. Maybe this was about territory more than love, but these things really are hopelessly intertwined in all of us. A nuthatch must keep interlopers out of the territory so there will be enough foraging to support a family. When you

year round, even after pairing. They spend their days foraging together, staying within fifty feet of each other, keeping in touch by means of their familiar "yank, yank, yank" call. One early New York ornithologist wrote, "... the nuthatch does not possess the gift of song," and even Henry David Thoreau described it as "a note dry and fettered ... unarticulate and half-thawed out."

Whatever the human critics may think, the life of the nuthatch is in fact a perfect one. It says what it says, does what it does. It is the most serious student of hawk behavior, noticing from a distance the presence of one of the small hawks that prey on little birds. It will freeze, the better to blend in with its surroundings, if the hawk is hunting. But it has been observed that one of these same hawks, such as a Cooper's hawk, may be perched very nearby and the nuthatch will show no concern. A nuthatch was seen foraging on a big pine limb, looking for insects under the bark, while a hawk sat on the same branch. The nuthatch got to within

a few feet and the hawk flew off. Obviously the nuthatch detected some subtle aspect of the hawk's behavior or posture which said there was no danger. This hawk was not hungry, not hunting.

By mid-February we New Englanders start to focus on the sugar maples, and so do the nuthatches. Those of us who drill holes and let the sap out create a fountain for others. The bird-world tap-



talk family, you are talking food, sex, the continuation of the species, and all the social systems that work to keep these plans moving forward like they should. I say it is all love.

Courtship and pairing in the nuthatch begin in mid-winter. Sometimes in winter a few nuthatches will get together at night for warmth, huddling up in a hollow tree, but mostly, they sleep alone all

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pers are the yellow-bellied sapsuckers; then nuthatches and others will follow looking for a treat. There may be insects, too, thawing out in early spring and visiting the sap holes. Nuthatches are principally insect eaters, looking for them in any season, knowing their habits just as perfectly as they know the habits of their own predators.

People have named the nuthatch Tree Mouse, Topsy-turvy Bird, and Devil-down-head. So often our naming betrays our own orientation more than anything inherent in the named. The most common name, Nuthatch, is not too bad. At first glance it seems to imply hopeless incubation of a tree seed. But the Old English meaning of the word "hatch" is "to cut," as in cutting wood with a hatchet. So we have named this bird for its ability to put a nut in a crevice and then bang away at it until it is cut open.

When our nuthatches are not busy creeping each other out with upside-down swaying, or forming conjugal bonds with arboreal chasing, they like to gather up seed after seed at our birdfeeder and pack them away for another time. We live in a log house, now thirty years old and deeply checked on its south-facing side. These cracks make perfect caching places for seeds and we often hear the purposeful whacking of a nuthatch visiting the store, opening up a meal. This is February; this is a perfect bird, expert at what it does. I say this is love: love of life.

— Bonner J. McAllester

TOWN OF MONTEREY SKATING RINK HOURS / WINTER 2005

MONDAY- FRIDAY

Dawn till 3 p.m.	Public Skating
3 to 5 p.m.	Kids/ Family Hockey Time
5 to 7:00 p.m.	Public Skating (may be closed for icemaking at this time also, skaters may be asked to leave the ice)
7 p.m. on, except Wednesday	Hockey Public Skating

SATURDAY

9 a.m.-12:30 p.m.	Southern Berkshire YMCA LESSONS until 2/9/05 Kids / Family Hockey Time (after 2/9/05)
noon to 3 p.m.	Public Skating
3 to 5 p.m.	Kids/Family Hockey
5 to 7 p.m.	CLOSED
7:00 to 9 p.m.	Saturday Night Public Skating Party

SUNDAY

9 a.m. - noon	Pickup Hockey
noon to 3 p.m.	Public Skating
3 - 5 p.m.	Kids/Family Hockey
after 5 p.m.	CLOSED for major icemaking repair

Skating rink hours: dawn to 9 p.m.; if finishing a game after 9 p.m., please be considerate of your neighbors and keep it quiet.

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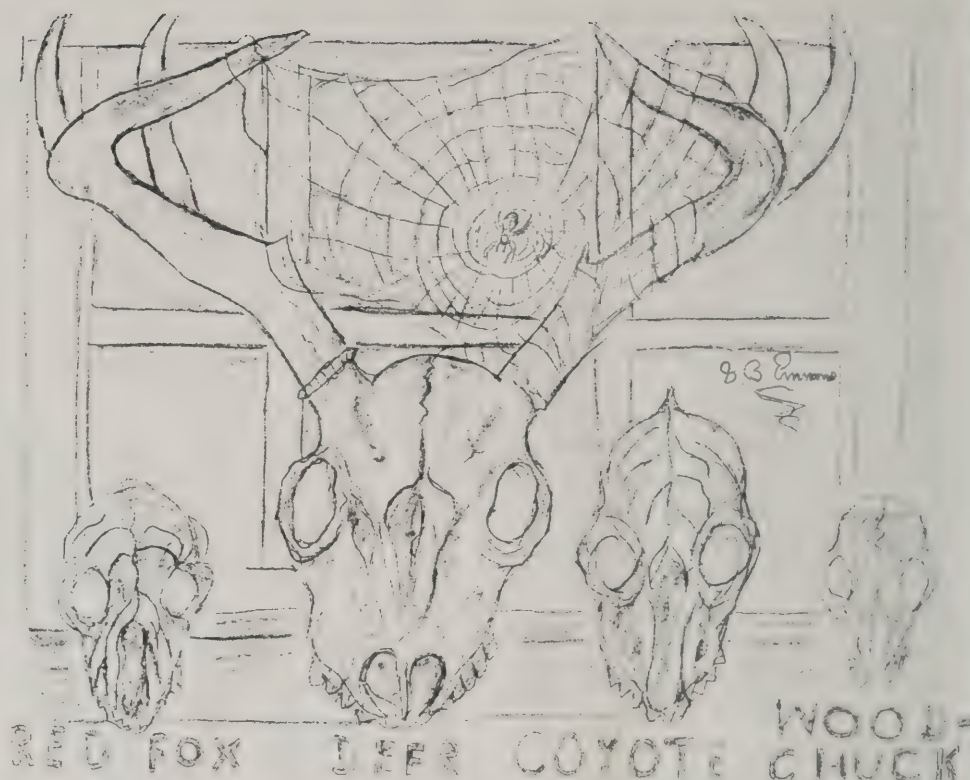
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A Dream Catcher for a Long Winters Nap

Following a deep sleep and a long night of a raging blizzard that buried the dead-of-winter landscape under two feet of snow, the morning sun shone brightly across a peaceful and pristine pastoral countryside. As I drove in four-wheel drive up the hill to the Hatchery to feed the fish, it was already almost midwinter, with Groundhog Day, February 2nd, barely a week away. Yet on this day, the canvas domes covering the circular pools looked more like igloos of an Eskimo village at the Arctic Circle. Still and all, whether the solar mammal sees or does not see his shadow, it is some comfort to attain this station of the Zodiac, even if it is only a myth conjured up by medieval minds long ago in a distant land far across the sea.

Inside the Nature Center adjacent to the Hatchery office, near where the fish pellets are stored, the fingerling rainbow trout were cavorting in their aquarium, oblivious of the length of the icicles hanging down outside the frosted windowpanes. In the morning light, the glass eyes of the stuffed heads of indigenous big game animals mounted on wooden plaques on the wall seemed to shine in anticipation of the second six weeks of winter. Along the edge of the window frames, a zoological collection of animal skulls included a number of mammals and the horns of a deer hung with strands of last summer's spider web that made it resemble a Native American dream catcher.

Almost all species of spiders are carnivorous, as indicated by their names,



such as wolf spider and lynx spider, for example, so the web of one spider in our Nature Center is not out of place, considering that the trout swimming in tanks nearby are among the most carnivorous of all fish. The fact that a spider's web looks like a dream catcher is no accident either. In the legend of the Dakota Plains Indians, long ago, a spiritual leader had the vision of a spider weaving a web of horsehair, feathers, and beads inside a willow hoop. The Indian belief was that the web represented the circle of life, used to help people reach their goals through capturing ideas, dreams, and visions. Good dreams are caught by the web, while bad ones are lost by dropping through the hole in the center.

If in this day and age, we are willing to celebrate the yarn of the groundhog and his shadow strung over the dusty rafters of an ancient folklore, we can believe that the resurrection of the Hatchery itself is no less than what Indians would have called a power dream, foretelling of great things that could be made to happen. The good of a power dream is captured in the web of life and carried with the people, but can also drop through the hole and be lost! We need more volunteers on a daily basis to construct the prophecy of a favorable horoscope, just as we hang our hopes and dreams on another season of successful support.

— George Emmons

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Seeking Tornado Stories

Strange as it may seem to those of us who lived here then, we're approaching the tenth anniversary of the 1995 Monterey Memorial Day tornado. I was on Route 7 heading north in Stockbridge when the funnel roared through, so my experience was oblique and after the fact. Still, I have powerful memories:

Stopping on the side of Route 7 when I couldn't see through the rain pelting horizontally from a mustard-lilac sky. Later, nearly home, a man who'd been brave enough to direct traffic on Route 23 that evening, though he may already have known about the deaths at nearby Eagleton School. When I blurted a classic, "But I just live a mile up the road!", he'd said in a dazed tone, "Lady everything up there's been flattened." Later that night I folded laundry at The Turning Point Inn, the same towels again and again, while listening to WSBS with others who couldn't get home and had taken shelter there.

Just after dawn, my first disorienting sight of the new landscape required more mental reorganization: "... What's that blue? Oh, a body of water. Oh, Lake Buel? ... but ... from Route 23?" Fragments of the Routes 23 & 57 sign embedded at angles in the meadow at Stevens Lake Road; our 20-minute-quarter-mile walk to get to the house from the meadow, over and around the fallen trees. I remember unspeakable relief when I saw a corner of the house, still standing; more

relief when I heard the dog barking, sounding unhurt, and from inside the house, which implied that the walls I couldn't see were still standing, too.

Later that morning, there were the solemn face and the maturing-as-he-spoke eyes of the young National Guardsman who knocked on the door to see if everyone inside was OK, or, as was also his mission, to find any dead. I remember checking on neighbors, neighbors checking on us, even driving through the center of town and waking up friends who, closer to Tyringham and still asleep, had no idea what I was talking about when I said, "I just want to let you know that we're OK."

It took a few Christmas seasons before I was able to fully enjoy again the misplaced holiday scent of pine sap, so overwhelming the first two or three days after the tornado. But I remember clearly, just a week after the tornado, sitting in the meadow where the street sign had landed. The sun had just set. I was surrounded by a swarm of fireflies, with stars starting to shine in the clear sky overhead, and the air was calm and sweet with the scent of clover. It was the moment I first knew deep post-tornado peace, and knew that healing had begun.

My version of this stroll down our collective Memory Lane is part of a dual-purpose request. Will is planning to recall the Memorial Day tornado in the *News* this year, and I'm working on a book manuscript which includes people's experiences of what the medieval folks called "the elements": fire, earth, air, water.

Although western science proposes a far different table of elements, this old group of four are still powerful images the psyche uses to create inner landscape. As all of us who were touched by the force of those tornado winds moving through Monterey recall, our inner worlds shifted, too. Some a little, some a lot.

So Will is seeking your tornado stories for the May issue of the *News*, and I'm searching for your tornado stories as possible material for my book. We're both looking to hear about experiences that were meaningful to you but, as you can tell from my ramblings, they don't have to be dramatic events. Although those, of course, are welcome too.

So send your Monterey Memorial Day Tornado memories, stories, and anecdotes to Will c/o the *News*, and/or to me (mkjordan@earthlink.net or PO Box 191, Monterey). We look forward to hearing from you!

— Mary Kate Jordan



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"Parking Lot Nation: the Coming End of Suburbia"

Feb 27 Lecture by James Howard Kunstler

The Great Barrington Land Conservancy (GBLC) will present author James Howard Kunstler as the speaker for its Spring 2005 Lecture to be held at 2 p.m. on Sunday, February 27, at Berkshire South Community Center, 15 Crissey Road, Great Barrington. Mr. Kunstler will speak about making plans for energy-efficient living and subsequent effects on town planning and development. Admission will be a \$10 donation to the Conservancy, at the door.

Author of *The Geography of Nowhere*, *Home From Nowhere*, and *The City in Mind*, Mr. Kunstler says he wrote *The Geography of Nowhere* "because I believe a lot of people share my feelings about the tragic landscape of highway strips, parking lots, housing tracts, megamalls, junked cities, and ravaged countryside that makes up the everyday environment where most Americans live and work. A land full of places that are not worth caring about will soon be a nation and a way of life that is not worth defending."

A portion of *Home From Nowhere*, which emphasizes remedies to this tragic landscape, appeared as the cover story

in the September 1996 *Atlantic Monthly*. His third book in the series, *The City in Mind: Notes on the Urban Condition*, is a wide-ranging look at cities here and abroad, an inquiry into what makes them great (or miserable), and a projection of what America is going to do with its mutilated cities. His next nonfiction book, *The Long Emergency*, which will be published in 2005 by The Atlantic Monthly Press, describes the changes that American society faces in the twenty-first century.

Mr. Kunstler is also the author of nine novels, including *The Halloween Ball*, *An Embarrassment of Riches*, and *Maggie Darling: A Modern Romance*. He is a regular contributor to the *New York Times Sunday Magazine* and op-ed page, where he writes about environmental and economic issues.

Mr. Kunstler was born in New York City in 1948. He graduated from the State University of New York, Brockport Campus, worked as a reporter and feature writer for a number of newspapers, and finally as a staff writer for *Rolling Stone*. He has lectured at Harvard, Yale, Columbia, Dartmouth, Cornell, MIT, RPI, the University of Virginia, and many other colleges. He lives in Saratoga Springs in upstate New York.



February Events in the Highlands

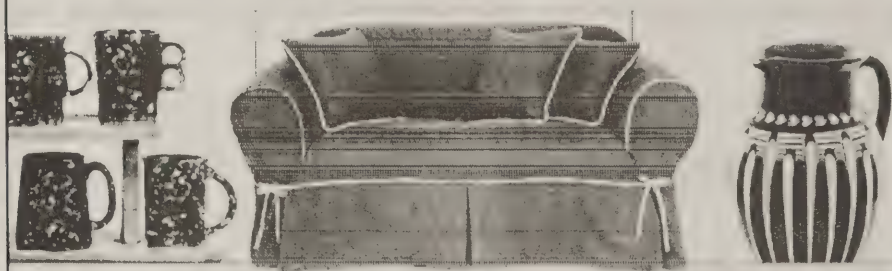
Conserving Land and Habitat: The Mighty Moose Slide Show and Land Conservation Options Presentation
Feb 17, Goshen Town Hall, 7-9 p.m.

This informative and interactive presentation with Wil Hastings of the Hilltown Land Trust will address the tax and estate benefits landowners can receive by conserving their property. John Foster, Director of the New England Naturalist Training Center, will also present a slide show describing moose behavior, life cycle, and habitat. Free and open to all.

Zoning Questions and Answers
Feb 24, Stanton Hall, Huntington, 7-9 p.m.

Do you have a nagging question about your zoning bylaw, or a section that you just don't understand? Come to the HCI Zoning Question and Answer Session on February 24 and get answers from the experts. Bob Ritchie, Assistant Attorney General, and Glen Garber, Center for Rural Massachusetts staff and professional planner, will offer legal and planning perspectives on your zoning questions. Please submit your questions or topics of interest in advance to us at (413) 268-8219 or e-mail jchristensen@ttor.org. \$5 per person, preregistration required.

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Back to Washington

To the Editor:

I've been to Washington again, this time to protest the inauguration of President George W. Bush. I don't believe he was fairly elected this time any more than in 2000, but even if he had been I would be standing with others to show how deeply I disapprove of his policies, foreign and domestic.

This is the fourth time I've taken the midnight bus to DC since this president took office. There is a certain similarity to these experiences: the cramped ride down with other protesters, talking politics and peace, sharing snacks and songs. Each person has a strategy involving water

bottle, sandwich, clothing, and signs. This time some of us wore white armbands to signify mourning for those killed in Iraq. Washington can be wicked cold in the early January morning, before the sun hits the streets. We had snow in the air this time, and something else, too.

This time, the actual object of our ire would be present. He would not be in Mexico or at Camp David, but driving by in a motorcade. We planned to line Pennsylvania Avenue and then turn our backs as he went by. After a few hours of marching and singing and waiting at a checkpoint, the moment arrived. I couldn't see a thing except the backsides of thousands of other protesters, but then this incredible roar rose up from everyone and they turned around. (I was now looking at their frontsides.) So I figured

Monterey Baseball

Baseball will again be offered to children ages 5 to 12 at Greene Park this coming season. Monterey Youth Baseball, featuring the Cal Ripken Program, will have instruction and games for three age groups, 5-7, 8-10, and 11-12.

The season will start in late April and finish in early July. More specific information will appear in the March issue of the *Monterey News*.

— Jim Edelman, Program Coordinator.

the limousine was out there somewhere and I turned my back to it, too.

Many long miles and hours later we got home, all tired out, our sandwiches eaten and our signs a little rumpled. People started asking me right away: What was it like? When you turned your back, do you think anyone noticed?

What a question! I went because I knew someone would notice: me.

— Bonner J. McAllester

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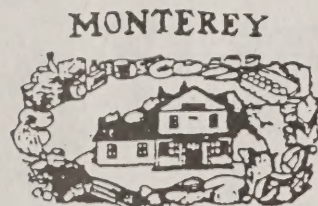
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Remembering Henry J. Makuc

Mr. Henry J. "Hank" Makuc, 80, of Main Road, Monterey died Monday evening, January 3, 2005, at Berkshire Medical Center.

Born in Lynn, Massachusetts, on October 29, 1924, he was the son of Joseph and Mary Arciszewska Makuc.

He was graduated from Lynn schools and went on to receive his Bachelor of Science degree from Salem State College in 1946 and his Masters Degree in education from Boston University in 1961.

Henry worked in education for thirty-five years. He started his career by teaching business classes in Somers, Connecticut, from 1946 until 1948. In 1948 he began teaching at the former Williams High School in Stockbridge, where he was also the assistant principal. During the formation of the Berkshire Hills Regional School District he was superintendent of the Stockbridge Schools. He later became principal at the former Dewey School and the Housatonic School. Henry also worked at Monument Mountain Regional High School as the AV director.

Henry was active in community affairs in Monterey. He served as the tax collector for thirty-three years until retiring in 2004. He was also the treasurer of the Monterey Water Company for thirty-five years.

He refereed local high school and college soccer games and was an avid Red Sox fan. He attended both Ted Williams' and Carl Yastrzemski's last games. Henry was a communicant of Our Lady

of the Valley Roman Catholic Parish in Sheffield for many years.

He is survived by his wife of forty-three years, the former Anne Marie Leuchs, whom he married on April 15, 1961, at St. Joseph's Church in Stockbridge, along with their seven children: Mark Makuc and his wife, Mary, of Monterey; John Makuc and his wife, Cynthia, of Monterey; James Makuc and his wife, Donna, of Boylston, Massachusetts; Christopher Makuc and his wife, Kathleen, of Rockville, Maryland; Anne Marie Enoch and her husband, Stephen, of Monterey; Marta Makuc of Monterey; and Paul Makuc and his wife, Jaime, of Lakeville, Connecticut. He also leaves two sisters, Albertina Makuc of Lynn, Massachusetts, and Cecelia Pieciewicz of Stow, Massachusetts, and eleven grandchildren, Gabriella, Joseph, Justin, Marya, Nadia, Jacob, Madeleine, Grace, Sarah, Matthew, and Elisabeth.

Mr. Makuc was predeceased by two children, Mary Elisabeth and Stephen Andrew.

Burial was in Corashire Cemetery in Monterey. Remembrances, memories, and reflections may be sent to the family through www.finnertyandstevens.com.

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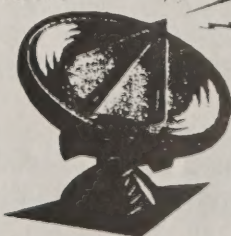
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Calendar

Every Monday (exc. holidays): Select Board meeting, 8:30 a.m.–noon, Town Offices.

Wednesday, February 9: Community Potluck Supper, 6 p.m., Monterey Meetinghouse. Writer's night; local writers read from their work. See p.5.

Thursday, February 10: Free blood pressure clinic, 2:30–3:30 p.m., Town Offices, administered by Visiting Nurses Assoc.

Sunday, February 13: Winter Snow Festival in Greene Park 1–4 p.m. See p.5.

Two documentary films about the work of Community Access to the Arts (CATA) in Great Barrington, 12 noon, Triplex Cinema, Great Barrington. *Too Much to Stop* is a 30-minute documentary, made by Stockbridge filmmaker John Whalan, about the artistic collaboration between choreographer Dawn Lane and Marisa Yudkin, a dancer with Huntington's Disease; includes footage shot at Jacob's Pillow. *Community Access to the Arts: Rhythm & Hues*, made by Whalan and Mati Kiin of West Stockbridge, is a

12-minute documentary about the work and experiences of CATA participants in 2003–2004 season, featuring several emerging local dancers and artists.

Monday, February 14: Two documentary films about the work of Community Access to the Arts (CATA) in Great Barrington, 6 p.m., Triplex Cinema, Great Barrington. See description under February 13 above. All Boards quarterly meeting to discuss budget requests for the Annual Town Meeting, 7 p.m. at Town Offices.

Wednesday, February 16: Informational meeting called by the Wilson-McLaughlin House Committee to discuss the creation of the Monterey Community Center, 7 p.m. at Town Offices.

Monday, February 21: President's Day. Town Offices closed.

Thursday February 24: Full Moon.

Saturday, February 26: Square and contra dancing, 8:30–11:30 p.m., Sheffield Grange, Rt. 7, Sheffield.

The Observer

December 26–January 25

High temp. (1/14)	58°
Low temp. (1/22)	-18°
Avg. high temp.	26.9°
Avg. low temp.	11.4°
Avg. temp.	19.2°
Total precipitation (rain and melted snow)	5.54"
Snowfall	37.2"
Precipitation occurred on 22 days.	

Music by Mountain Laurel. Caller Bob Olson. All dances are taught, beginners and children are welcome. Adults \$6, children \$3. Information 528-9385.

Sunday, February 27: Great Barrington Land Conservancy presents a lecture by author James Kunstler, 2 p.m. at Berkshire South Community Center. Conservancy donation of \$10 at the door. See p. 16.

Hoot

Round-Robin Music in the Grand Old Style

FRIDAY MARCH 11 730

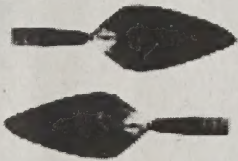
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Contributions from local artists this month:
Maureen Banner, pp. 3, 8, 11, 15; George Emmons, p. 14;
Bonner McAllester, p. 12; Glynis Oliver, p. 6.

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